

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant respectfully acknowledges receipt of the Office Action mailed June 7, 2006. In that Office Action, the Examiner (i) rejected claims 1-7, 10-11 and 13-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 5,096,975 Anderson et al.; (ii) rejected claims 8, 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Anderson et al. in view of US 3,833,457 Misumi et al. and US 3,677,979 Beaulieu; and (iii) rejected claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over US 20020161088A1 Kochvar et al. in view of Misumi et al. and Anderson et al. and Joseph et al. In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 17, added new claim 19, and requests that the amended claims be allowed in view of the following submissions.

As amended, claim 1 specifies that the water-soluble film has a selected water-solubility rate and specifies the method by which the film is made. The method requires that a composition comprising the blend of polyvinyl alcohol and the sulfonate polymer be prepared, the sulfonate polymer being present in the blend in a selected weight percent of the blend, and the film is formed from said composition, the film having the selected water-solubility rate, the rate being dependent on the selected weight percent of the sulfonate polymer in the blend. These new features of the amended claim are supported in the specification, for example in paragraphs 33, the Examples and Table 1.

Similarly, amended claim 17 and new claim 19 specify that the sulfonate polymer is present in the blend of polyvinyl alcohol and water-soluble sulfonate polymer in a selected weight percent of the blend, the selected water-solubility rate of the film being dependent on the selected weight percent of the sulfonate polymer.

It is submitted that these new features of claims 1, 17 and 19 are clearly not disclosed or suggested in any way by the references cited by the Examiner. These independent claims are therefore novel and unobvious in view of the references. Independent claims 2-16 all depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and dependent claim 18 depends from claim 17. The dependent claims are therefore also clear of the references.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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